



Aalto University
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MUSIC SHARING: THE SOCIAL DRIVERS BEHIND THE PHENOMENON

Otto Saarinen

International Business

Bachelor's Thesis

Supervisor: Miikka J. Lehtonen

Date of approval: 9 April 2020

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ABSTRACT OF
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Objectives

The main objective of this study was to combine electronic word-of-mouth and interaction on social networking sites regarding music. The two concepts have been studied before, but the former not related to music nor the latter from the perspective of consumer-to-consumer. The thesis also aimed to answer the three research questions that were introduced.

Summary

A literature review was done to examine the motivators for engaging in word-of-mouth behavior on electronic platforms. From what was found, a conceptual framework was created to help examine the trend of music sharing on social networking sites. The research itself was conducted via a qualitative study, in which six people took part in two individual semi-structured interviews and were asked to go through a life event that has happened to them. All of the participants had a history of music sharing on social networking platforms and were more or less still active in that regard. Based on the previous research done on electronic word-of-mouth, it was expected that homophily, the feeling of belonging and perceived relationship with the

artist would be the biggest motivational contributors to the sharing. While all of these were met, the social sharing of emotion also seemed to be an important factor for sharing music.

Conclusions

People view social aspects, such as belonging to a group and perceived relationship with an artist, as important in their sharing habits. Most of the existing literature agrees with the importance of social factors, but some add other motives, such as economic incentives. The inclusion of social sharing of emotion and its secondhand sharing seems to be a driver that is not recognized by other authors, but that seems to be mainly due to the context.

Key words: *music sharing, social networking site, social media, word-of-mouth, music industry*

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1. MUSIC SHARING ON SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

For an artist, a song represents a story, whether it is about a lost love or that one time you and your friends pulled a prank on your neighbor. It is full of different meanings, hidden behind lyrics that are created to resonate with us. Music is something that awakes different feelings in us, it moves us, it serves as a self-reflective tool. People use it to connect with their friends and acquaintances, it is a way to interact and express yourself. As Bliss n Eso (2017) wrote in their song "Blue": "There's a magic in the moment you put on those headphones, and no matter what you're going through if only for a second that drama lets go". The same has been expressed by other artists, like Twenty One Pilots and Eminem to name a few. We not only like to enjoy it by ourselves, but we also recommend the songs we appreciate to others, whether that be to a friend or an acquaintance. While there has already been named a few reasons why we listen to music, what actually drives our music sharing?

Especially in the digital world, word travels significantly faster and reaches a lot more people compared to face-to-face interaction. In 2018, the average internet user spent 136 minutes of his daily activities on social networking sites (SNSs), which is an increase of 46 minutes in six years. Also, from 2013 to 2018, the average number of social media accounts per internet user has nearly doubled to 8,5 (www.statista.com). This information emphasizes, how a human in modern society will increasingly use their time in the digital world, thus also growing the amount of content created and shared on various platforms.

These platforms have introduced applications that ease the sharing of music, for instance Instagram Stories, that had 500 million daily active users in 2019 (www.statista.com), has its own music feature. It is now easier than ever to share music to a friend, but why would someone want to share it? Reasons for sharing have been studied by several authors (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Chu & Kim, 2011; Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012; Salo et al., 2013; King et al., 2014; Hussain et al., 2018), focusing on the phenomenon called word-of-mouth. While it is a researched topic, I was not able to find studies done in the context of music. Music industry,

meanwhile, has been studied and the interactions between artists and fans has been studied by many (Salo et al., 2013; Daellenbach et al., 2015; Saboo et al., 2016; Verboord & van Noord, 2016; Haynes & Marshall, 2017). Still, the consumer-to-consumer interaction seems to have gained little to no attention.

This thesis aims to research those reasons by first examining the existing literature on word-of-mouth and its drivers, after which a conceptual framework is introduced. The methodology will be presented, including the study design, data collection and research ethics. Lastly, findings will review the results, followed by discussion and conclusions, alongside with implications for businesses and suggestions for further research.

1.2. Research Gap

Artists' communication with their fanbases and other musicians has been studied before from different perspective (Salo et al., 2013; Daellenbach et al., 2015; Saboo et al., 2016; Verboord & van Noord, 2016; Haynes & Marshall, 2017), while the consumer-to-consumer interaction has fallen to little attention. Word-of-mouth research focuses on this specific communication, but as far as I know, has not studied it related to music. By combining these two, we have an identified knowledge gap, that is the word-of-mouth communication between consumers regarding music and their motivators for engaging in it on SNSs.

1.3. Research Questions

Due to my own interest in the topic and especially the emotional aspect of music sharing, three research questions (RQs) were specified for this study:

1. Are the motivational factors the same for WoM in music context, as they are in normal SNS context?
2. How does the emotional reaction to a song affect the sharing process on SNSs?

3. How well do the experienced emotions translate into second-hand sharing on SNSs?

The first RQ was determined to see whether the motivators change when the context changes to music. I initially thought that there might be a possibility of it happening, as the consumption of music differs from other products. Because of this, I felt the RQ was justifiable. The second RQ was created to serve my main interest, how largely does the emotional impact affect the sharing of a song? When examining the topic, the third RQ appeared as something to deepen the understanding of emotional impact on the listener and their sharing habits.

1.4. Structure of the Thesis

After the introductory section, the research itself will start with going through the prior research regarding SNSs and word-of-mouth behavior, especially on digital platforms. Also included in the literature review, will be the identified consumer motives for engaging in music sharing. Lastly, the created conceptual framework is introduced, guiding the discussion and findings in the following section.

Data and methodology section is the next topic being discussed, going through the study's design, data collection method, participants, data analysis and research ethics. It is followed by findings and discussion, the former focusing on what was found regarding the RQs and overall, while the latter aims to examine these findings in the light of prior literature by other authors.

Finally, conclusions will be offered, also going through the limitations of the conducted study. The study's business implications will be introduced, as well as the possible future research areas that could be expanded on. References and appendices are located at the end of the thesis, starting after "Future Research" section.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Framing

The objective of this literature review is to examine the topics surrounding interaction amongst consumers of music on different social media platforms. Concepts of social media, social networking site, word-of-mouth and its credibility will be explained and studied, alongside with the different consumer motives for engaging in digital word-of-mouth behavior, using SNSs as the designated channel for sharing music. Various theories will also be explored in the light of these factors. The review will identify the missing gap in literature, introduce the conceptual framework, and lastly get to the conclusion.

2.2. Social Media and Social Networking Sites

Social media is the umbrella term used for online technologies and features, that promote sharing of information, social interaction, and creating content, whether it is in text, video or picture format (Power, 2014). As Elmore (2010) describes, it is built around social involvement and it thrives as the service that provides a platform for that interaction. Individuals get a major part of their information from these sources compared to the more traditional ones like television and newspapers (Lipscomb, 2010), also providing a more simplified version of the content sharing process digitally. For example, how Twitter or Facebook has eased the communication between people compared to only using email to connect.

Social media's main attributes are the two-way interaction between users (companies, individuals), and the user-generated content that various platforms are full of (Salo et al., 2013; van Dijck & Poell, 2013). Whether it is Instagram and its photo-based sharing, Twitter with the text-based, Facebook with both, or YouTube

with videos, the users continue to provide their own insights and opinions via these channels.

		Social presence/ Media richness		
		Low	Medium	High
Self-presentation/ Self-disclosure	High	Blogs	Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook)	Virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
	Low	Collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia)	Content communities (e.g., YouTube)	Virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)

Table 1: Classification of social media by social presence/media richness and self-presentation/self-disclosure (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

SNSs are a part of social media, but they remove certain sites and applications out of the scope. As Kaplan & Haenlein (2010: 63) adequately described:

Social networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other.

This definition helps to focus the topic of the paper around SNSs, excluding social media such as content communities and blogs, but still including instant messaging apps, which can be perceived as SNSs due to them being interaction channels for individuals and a platform for content creation.

The importance of social media, usually focusing on SNSs, has been studied from multiple music related perspectives, such as its possible leveling effect on geographical disadvantages (Verboord & van Noord, 2016), impact on fan-musician relationship (Daellenbach et al., 2015), and overall use for artist marketing (Salo et al., 2013; Haynes & Marshall, 2017; Saboo et al., 2016). What is similar with these fields of research, is that all of them examine the relationship between fan and

musician, or between musicians, thus not engaging in conversation regarding the consumer-to-consumer (C2C) interaction.

2.3. Word-of-Mouth

Traditional word-of-mouth's (WoM) early conception was face-to-face passing of information (Godes et al., 2005), which was mostly verbal (Libai et al., 2010) and occurred in everyday settings (King et al., 2014). Since then, the key motivators to engaging in WoM behaviour have been identified, as Dichter's (1966) study highlighted perceived product-involvement, self-involvement, other-involvement, and message-involvement to be the four essential factors. While Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) acknowledges Dichter's (1966) study as the most prominent in the field of WoM communication motives, a main weakness is reported: the lack of detailed information regarding the development of Dichter's typology. In recent times, WoM interaction between consumers has been on the rise due to several reasons. According to Libai et al. (2010), there are three main "fundamental changes in the marketplace", which have affected the influence of WoM in an increasing manner: the internet and how it has connected consumers in a way that was not possible before, managers and academics can access "comprehensive C2C information", and the companies' focus shifting towards customer engagement.

WoM's prominence can especially be seen on the internet, which provides various avenues for consumers to share their thoughts, experiences and views with others, also providing companies an opportunity to capitalize on WoM marketing (Trusov et al., 2009). Due to the increased use in the digital world, there is also a separate term for electronically transmitted information among consumers: electronic WoM (eWoM). Kunst and Vatrappu (2019) highlight that while the fundamental element of C2C communication is the same for WoM and eWoM, the latter carries a unique set of traits made possible by the internet. These characteristics are said to be the

increased speed of transmission (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Godes et al. 2005; King et al., 2014), observability and measurability (King et al., 2014; Cheung & Thadani, 2012), greater anonymity (King et al., 2014; Godes et al., 2005), and enhanced volume (King et al., 2014). All this compared to traditional method, which allows a person only to communicate with people only in close proximity to them. Also, when partaking in conversation via one-to-one platform, usually the receiver of information and their credibility is known (Steffes & Burgee, 2009; Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

Chu & Kim (2011) identify three aspects through which eWoM in SNSs can be studied: opinion seeking, opinion giving and opinion passing. When a person ranks high on opinion-seeking behaviour, they tend to search for consultation from others, when making decisions. Someone with a high level of opinion-giving behaviour is called an opinion leader, or an influential as per (Libai et al., 2010), who exercises considerable influence on others. This may demonstrate itself in for instance how an opinion leader's liking in music transmits to people surrounding her. In a digital environment, however, Chu & Kim (2011) state that "interactivity enables dynamic and interactive eWoM where a single person can take on the multiple roles of opinion provider, seeker and transmitter."

Concluding, Trusov et al. (2009) highlighted the relationship between SNSs and both referral behaviours, as SNSs tend to operate through network effect: the more users there are, the more valuable the service becomes. This encourages both WoM and eWoM, making them essential to any platform's emergence.

2.3.1. The Perceived Credibility of WoM

In platforms like SNS, the way in which consumers voluntarily expose themselves to brand information is essential. They seek for ways to interact with brands, but also share their views with others, enabling "truly interactive eWoM" (Chu & Kim, 2011). This raises the question of when eWoM starts to occur, how credible is that information in the eyes of the population?

Since WoM is created and delivered by a known, more persuasive and trust-worthy source of information compared to traditional marketing methods (Feick & Price, 1987), the target population tends to prefer it when searching for information on which to base their final decision (Chu & Kim, 2011; Cheung & Thadani, 2012). This way, the social effects related to WoM, for instance knowing the one sharing the information, can have a great influence on the perceived value consumers place on different pieces of information (Steffes & Burgee, 2009).

Continuing from a SNS perspective, trust is also a factor in the digital world, and thus has an influence on eWoM that transmits via SNS. Once a user trusts their connections in their list of friends, their willingness to depend on those friends is heightened due to the perceived reliability and trustworthiness. As a result, all of this increases the eWoM behaviour that is occurring in the digital world (Chu & Kim, 2011). Chu & Kim (2011) also highlight, that another trait typical for SNSs are the readily available networks that people have, which tends to accelerate and facilitate eWoM. Even though traditional WoM, and eWoM to some extent, hold quite high credibility, the electronic nature of eWoM tends to remove the receiver's ability to judge the plausibility of the sender and their message. The verity depends heavily on "the altruistic nature of the sender" to forward information that is useful to the receiver (Steffes & Burgee, 2009). This indicates that when the safe and well-known option is replaced by an unknown source of information, there is a possibility of selfish- or profit-motivated communication: a company writing positive reviews of their own products or giving underwhelming reviews to their competitor's goods.

In the study conducted by Steffes & Burgees (2009) on eWoM forums, focusing on ratemyprofessor.com, it was found that the information produced by strangers was deemed as equally influential in decision making as the receiver's own firsthand experiences with the professor in question. In addition, the information provided by the eWoM forum was held to higher regard compared to traditional WoM, for instance face-to-face conversation with a friend. This suggests that contrary to popular belief, strong relationships are not always the most influential ones.

Concluding, traditional WoM's credibility stems from the known information sharer and their relationship with the receiver (Feick & Price, 1987; Chu & Kim, 2011; Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Steffes & Burgee, 2009). With regards to eWoM, the question of credibility is a bit more clouded, as it would be appropriate to deduce that due to the possibility of being dependent on unknown information sharer, the credibility would suffer. Still, Steffes and Burgee's (2009) study shows how information shared between complete strangers in a digital platform was valued higher compared to traditional WoM, countering the previous deduction.

2.3.2. Consumer Motives for Engaging in eWoM

There are several different factors identified for engaging in eWoM, many of which are related to the communicator's perceived relationships with friends, public figures and complete strangers. Also, while not necessarily directed towards explaining the sharing of music, multiple sources deal with concepts related to sharing of information overall that may also apply to music.

The Communication Between Artists and Fans

The sharer's perceived relationship with the artist can be one component encouraging the sharing. It can be said that SNSs provide a new platform that may facilitate some kind of friendship between individuals who have never met and possibly never will. While the connection might not be genuine or "real", to the fan it might feel like it, thus affecting their buying and sharing behaviour (Daellenbach et al., 2015). How Beer (2008) described it, was certain "perception of proximity", which does not necessarily refer to the physical proximity, but the perceived emotional closeness. Daellenbach et al. (2015) also note that when fans feel like they have a chance of bilateral interaction, experiencing that there is a possibility of an online conversation, it develops a positive and strong tie with the musician. Granovetter (1973) defined tie as a positive and symmetric link between two people, incorporating time spent together, emotional intensity, intimacy and reciprocity as the indicators for whether the tie is a strong or a weak one. Tie strength describes this

relationship. Based on Granovetter's (1973) tie strength, Daellenbach et al. (2015) hypothesised that the more interaction there is available with the musician's SNS, the more time the fan will spend on the SNS. It could also be presumed that eWoM increases once the interaction with the artist rises. Overall the stimuli that comes from the musician's side is important for eWoM, as if there is absence of new releases, eWoM "decreases as consumers have fewer (new) things to talk about" (Saboo et al., 2016). Akrimi & Khemakhem (2012) would agree with this, since they also write how overall product involvement increases the tendency to refer the item in question forward, in this context, music.

Sense of Belonging

The second possible motivator for sharing is also social, the sense of community and belonging to a group. The desire to maintain and establish social relationships can be seen as one of the reasons for sharing content, in this context sharing of music via SNSs (Chu & Kim, 2011; Brown & Reingen, 1987; Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012; Hussain et al., 2018; Belk, 2013). As Chu & Kim (2011: 51) described it:

Given that social connectivity is at the core of SNSs, social relationship-related variables are crucial in comprehending the underlying eWoM process, as these variables provide insights into the properties of social relations by which eWoM behaviour transpires.

Strengthening the statement, a study made by Hussain et al. (2018) revealed that among other self-worth reinforcement and economic motivation, social interaction is regarded as one of the primary drivers for eWoM involvement. Also, it could be deducted that the closeness that is experienced by friends of the sharer can also have an influence on how those friends share the music.

Moreover, Belk (2013) claimed that sharing and certain sense of joint possession help develop a sense of community, while researching his "Extended Self in a Digital World". It builds perceived group identity, even when the people are not known. Friends are also in a position where they can reaffirm others' sense of self and

belonging by commenting on the shared content, whether it is music, a picture or something else (Belk, 2013). The group feeling can become so intense, that when two people exchange information regularly, it can transform from one person's expression into the possession of the group (Baym, 2007).

Lastly, social identity theory can be implemented here, as it deals with the self and identity being defined by shared attributes, like taste in music, among group members (Hogg et al., 2017). Brewer and Gardner's (1996) collective self adds to this, too, as it is based on the group membership. Collective self refers to the perception of self as a part of the collective, rather than being unique individual and the bonds are not necessarily derived from the social bonds, but from the shared identification with the group.

Shared Similarities

The degree to which people who interact with each other are similar in certain traits, is called homophily (Rogers & Bhowmik, 1970). These similarities can be characteristics such as gender, age, education and taste in music. Some have suggested that aforementioned tie strength and homophily are interchangeable (Gatignon & Robertson, 1985), while others view them separate constructs (Steffes & Burgee, 2009; Brown & Reingen, 1987). The difference between the two is sufficiently described by Steffes and Burgee (2009) as that homophily refers to the similarities in the attributes of individuals in relationships, whereas tie strength "is a property of the strength of the relationship itself".

Because of the similarities, people tend to find it easier to engage in conversations (Chu & Kim, 2011; Brown & Reingen, 1987). Also, it is highlighted that since homophilous individuals have higher chance of interacting with one another, these ties may increase the likelihood of activating eWoM behaviour (Chu & Kim, 2011; Brown & Reingen, 1987). In the context of music, it can be deducted that similar taste in music among people encourages their sharing of that certain genre within that group.

Self-reflection through Music

People reflect themselves through physical items they own, social connections they have, and skills that they have acquired over time (Belk, 1988). Belk's (2013; 2014) more recent studies also discuss, how digital possessions can become a part of someone's identity in the same way as tangible belongings are, for instance music that is accessed via streaming services. The sharing of these digital items can be significant in fortifying our sense of self, and as Belk (2013) and Tufekci (2012) suggest, that identity is also co-constructed due to the two way communications offered by SNSs. This refers to how a person can share a picture, video, or piece of music and get near instant feedback and self-affirmation from others.

Study made by Larsen et al. (2010) also strengthens this outlook, as it seems people place high value on how people view them through music. The data gathered showed how many individuals played and shared music based on how they wanted to present themselves. This could also be applied to someone sharing music via, for instance, Instagram's Instagram Stories function. The study found, that the image the participant had of the other person influenced the type of music that was played, especially if the person was a stranger. One of the participants described a moment like this, when she met two random people, and altered her playlist based on the assumption that the strangers seemed to be conservative, thus probably not liking her punk music. This could be linked to Dialogical Self Theory, which describes the notion that people have the ability to position themselves differently based on the situation, showcasing a different version of self (Bahl & Milne, 2010). This theory differs from Belk's Extended Self in that it recognizes multiple selves, compared to Belk's one that has extensions.

People-based factors were found to be not as important as the situational factors (Larsen et al., 2010). The overall desire to share music that is enjoyable for most and appreciated is high. Based on this, it could be reasoned that the idea of expressing certain level of homophily and thus advancing the belonging into a group, can be seen as one of the factors to altering what kind of music a person decides to share in

different situations. The feedback that is given based on these musical choices can make someone feel like they are accepted (Larsen et al., 2010). This co-construction of self, as Belk (2013) and Tufekci (2012) depicted, only strengthens as SNSs provide a more direct and efficient channel of both-way communication.

Opinion leaders usually were the ones promoting a more knowledgeable discussion regarding music (Larsen et al., 2010). These experts tend to have a positive influence on others listening (Hussain et al., 2018), so if someone were to be recognized as an opinion leader in music, it would be appropriate to expect that their suggestions on music have a slightly higher rate of positivity and acceptance around them. It could be also said that these experts are trusted in their opinion, which accelerates the spreading of music, since when there is confidence towards the sharer, people tend to be more willing to view the information (Chu & Kim, 2011).

Shared Emotions

Rimé (2009) studied how age affects the social sharing of emotions, and what are the reasons behind this. The main focus was on massive changes or events in life, and music was not considered. An example that was used, was once a serious incident occurred, people would take their phones out and start calling people close to them, taking pictures and overall sharing the situation. This was to show how emotional impact can trigger sharing. While the text was not music related, I believe that this is also applicable to music, since it has been studied how music arouses intense emotions in listeners (Liljeström et al., 2012). People can have strong emotional reactions to songs due to the lyrics, beat, et cetera, so based on Rimé's (2009) study on social sharing of emotion it is justifiable to assume that it also happens with music. The sharing could continue, thus creating secondary sharing, though the emotions felt by the sharer may not extend to the next person the same way it did for the initial listener (Liljeström et al., 2012).

Based on what has been read, the research regarding music industry and interaction in SNSs seems to mainly surround the artist and their communication with fanbases

or possibly other artists, not discussing the C2C counterpart. WoM research on the other hand focuses on that particular interaction, but to the best of my knowledge has not done it in the context of music. When combining these two, we have a gap in knowledge that is the communication between consumers regarding music in SNS environment and what are the motivating factors to engage in the sharing of music via these channels.

2.4. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used in this research is based on Chu and Kim's (2011) "proposed model of eWoM in social networking sites" (p. 53) and Cheung and Thadani's (2012) integrative framework.

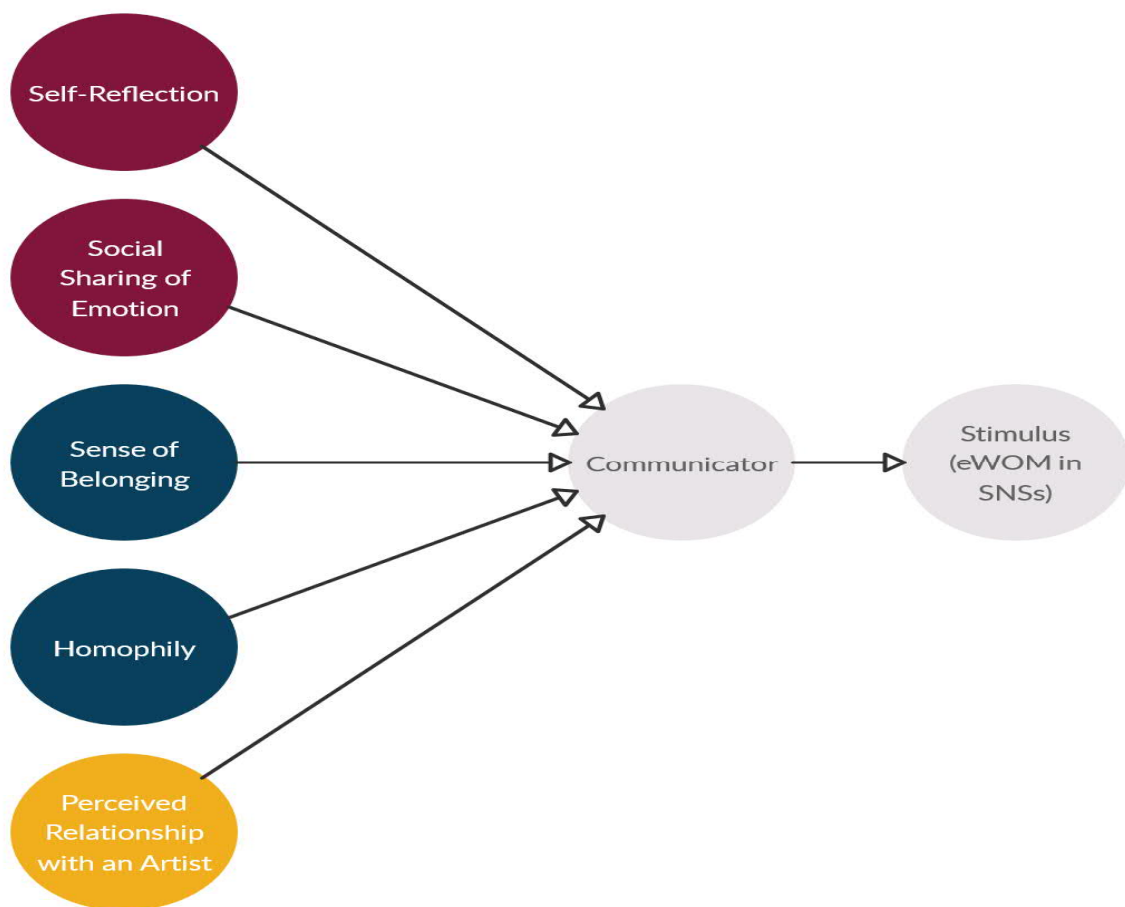


Figure 1: Motives for Communicator to engage in eWoM in SNSs

Based on the literature that was read, five key factor have been identified that affect the sharer's eWoM behaviour. Some of these elements are more similar than others, thus the use of same colour in depicting them. Still, none of them exist independently.

The ones coloured in blue, *Sense of Belonging* and *Homophily*, are both closely circulating the idea of groups, thus the same colour has been used when portraying them. The motivators *Self-Reflection* and *Social Sharing of Emotions* are more towards the individual's motivations to express themselves to others, rather than creating a group and fitting in. Last of the five is *Perceived Relationship with an Artist*, which examines how that relationship may increase eWoM from the sharer's perspective. Terms communicator and stimulus are used based on Cheung and Thadani's (2012) framework, communicator being the sharer and stimulus being the shared content, music.

2.5. Conclusion

This literature review has offered an insight into the reasons why an individual might feel the need to share music via SNSs, looked at relevant theories related to sharing and engaging in both traditional WoM and eWoM and overall looked at the texts surrounding social media and its uses in the music industry. The framework that has been created identifies five key factors that affect the sharing of music, out of which two differ from Chu and Kim's (2011) proposed model. Social needs, such as having a conversation with someone, belonging to a group and establishing a relationship, are seen as the drivers for the music sharing on SNSs, as are with other WoM behaviours. Also, the possible impact of emotions in the music sharing process is brought up, as Rimé (2009) discusses the emotional sharing of life events.

Music industry's use of SNSs in enhancing interaction is a researched subject, but mainly from artist-to-listener point of view, leaving the C2C interaction to little focus. WoM as a whole circles around that specific phenomenon, but to the best of my knowledge has not been studied in the context of music. A knowledge gap in C2C eWoM regarding music has been identified and a conceptual framework has been created to study it.

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The research is based on qualitative data, gathered through six interviews, which's questions can be found from the appendices. The initial idea was to create a quantitative survey, but qualitative study was deemed to be the most appropriate, as the prior research focused on other music related topics, such as how social media and geography affect artists' mainstream popularity (Verboord & van Noord, 2016), and social media's use for artist marketing (Salo et al., 2013). The need to build and provide a base for the future research of C2C sharing regarding music and its driving factors was identified, for which the qualitative method was seen as suitable.

3.1 Study Design

The study's purpose was to examine the motivators for people to share music on SNSs, by gathering primary, qualitative data through interviews. Initially, the research was done as a completely narrative study, having the participants go through an event when a piece of music was found, its sharing process, and the possible feedback that was gotten. To get a deeper understanding of the experienced event, additional questions were asked when needed, depending on what the interviewee had to say about certain aspects of the event.

The initial interviews conducted between 27th of February and 3rd of March showed, however, that slightly more structured way of interviewing was needed, as while the narrative method worked, the event that was recalled did not produce as much data as was expected. Because of this, the interviewees were asked to participate in a second interview, which still revolved around the narrative, but had seventeen broader interview questions with their own sub sections. In total, the number rose to thirty questions. These additional questions helped to build the discussion by offering the participants more stimuli to work with. The second and final interview still was semi-structured, as what the participants had to say highly shaped the interview and the questions that were needed to ask. Even though the interviews were unique, the core delivery stayed the same with each one.

While still including the initial interview's focus on the action of sharing and the reasons for it, the improved version broadened the scope slightly. Conducted between 10th of March and 11th of March, the second interview's first questions were designed to measure the participant's knowledge and interaction with music and SNSs. These questions were straightforward, asking the interviewee to tell the approximate time spent listening to music and time spent on SNSs daily. Also, music's importance to the individual was mapped, followed by questions regarding the action of music sharing on SNSs, also including the original narrative question.

The second section of the interview went on to ask about the motives for sharing on SNSs. It was the main focus of the first interview, and it was built around the five identified sharing motives: social sharing of emotion, homophily, self-reflection, sense of belonging and perceived relationship with an artist.

Two new sections were introduced after the motives section: feedback and being the receiver. Both were designed to give a deeper understanding of the interviewee's thoughts and reasons for interacting with other people via music sharing. The latter of the segments also aimed to uncover how social sharing of emotion would translate into second-hand sharing of emotion. The interview ended with questions regarding age and origin.

3.2. Data Collection and Participants

The data was collected from six individuals via interviews of which the total duration varied from 30 to 50 minutes. The first five interviewees were interviewed on two occasions, as a more in-depth session was needed. The last one was interviewed with the upgraded format and thus didn't need a second instance. The main channel for interviewing was deemed to be face-to-face, as it does not have time delay, resulting in more spontaneous reactions. Also, the possibility to read the participant's social cues, such as body language, is an advantage as it can provide some further insights. One of the interviews was conducted on the phone, which loses the

aforementioned advantage, but is still instantaneous with interaction. In total, there were five face-to-face and one phone-call interview.

In order to be as precise as possible with the participants' thoughts, meanings and words, the interviews were recorded with either a downloadable application for Android, Cube ACR, in the case of the phone-call interview or with the phone's own recorder with in person conversations.

The only demographic requirement was that the participants were under 30 years old, as the study focuses on the younger generations who share more on digital platforms. In the end the age distribution of the interviewees was from 20 to 23 year-olds, as can be seen from the table below. Also, all of the participants were university students, while two were also working in addition to their studies.

The table 2 was created to provide a visual, easy to understand presentation of the participants' demographic similarities and differences. As was mentioned before, their age varied from 20 to 23 years, which can be seen from the table. Also, women were more represented compared to men, with a ratio of four to two.

Participant Code	Gender	Age	Nationality	Occupation
A	Female	21	Finnish/Iranian	Full-time student
B	Female	22	Finnish	Student, working
C	Male	23	Finnish/Bangladeshi	Full-time student
D	Female	20	Vietnamese	Full-time student
E	Female	20	Vietnamese	Full-time

				student
F	Male	23	Finnish	Student, working

Table 2: Interviewees' demographical details.

As can be seen from table 2, the participants were all students, while two of them also worked on the side of studying. The nationalities of the people participating were quite diverse, with two being Vietnamese, two being completely Finnish and lastly two being a combination of Finnish and either Iranian or Bangladeshi. Still, the majority were Finnish, as four of the participants listed it as their nationality.

People who regularly share music on SNSs were chosen to be the target population for the interviews, as they would be more immersed in the topic and more likely to provide meaningful data. A person who does not share that often, might not have reflected on their actions as much and would overall have less experiences to go through in the interview, compared to the frequent communicators. Also, the difficulty to derive any relevant connections within the answers would have been greater. Due to these reasons, the participants were found a few weeks in advance, by observing who are the most active sharers on SNSs. Once these people were identified, they were asked to participate in the study and after receiving positive answers, a specific time for the interview was agreed on.

3.3. Data Analysis

The data gathered via interviews was analyzed by going through the recordings and writing clear transcripts of those recordings on a separate word document, while also highlighting the important themes. The transcribing left out non-essential words and sentences that were said by the participant, but was otherwise verbatim. After these, a table was created to help me visually see the dominant trends, easing the data analysis.

The method used for data analysis was slightly simplified version of the Gioia methodology. As Gioia et al. (2012) explain, the method eases the data analysis by providing a way to divide the work into four separate actions. It will start with 1st-order analysis, in which the semi-structured interview will uncover various different terms and codes faithful to the participants' words. The number of different categories can vary from fifty to a hundred, as the first part aims to see everything the study is working with. After the overview is done, 2nd-order analysis starts, in which the researchers identify similarities and differences between the codes, reducing the number of categories. These new themes are given labels or phrasal descriptors to fit the group. To further narrow down the themes, aggregate dimensions are introduced from the 2nd-order analysis. Lastly, a data structure is built, which is a visual representation of the development of the themes and codes within the conducted interviews.

3.4. Research Ethics

While conducting the research, the objective representation of data was pursued, disclosing the participants' replies as neutral and not portraying them in a negative light. Careless errors were limited to the minimum by reviewing the work and the interview recordings were kept clear and anonymous. The people volunteering in the research were informed of all of these during the start of the interview. The anonymity of the participants was reached through naming each with a single, letter in alphabetical order and also not asking the name during the recording as it was not necessary. The recordings are confidential and can only be found on my personal phone and school email, which was used for backup. The privacy of the interviewees was respected, not forcing anyone to say anything they did not want to share.

3.5. Conclusion

Initially, the data was planned to be gathered via quantitative methods, but due to lack of prior research on the specific subject, qualitative interviews were noted to be

the most appropriate way of building knowledge on the topic. The study consisted of two sets of interviews, done with six participants from 27th of February to 11th of March.

For the interviewees, the only requirements were that they are under 30 years old, since the study focuses on younger generations, and that the participants are relatively active in music sharing on SNSs, as meaningful data would be easier to collect. The data analysis was done by applying the Gioia methodology to ease the interpretation of the results.

In terms of ethics, the participants were informed that the data they provide will stay anonymous and unchanged, except for the removal of non-essential words and sentences. Lastly, the privacy of the interviewee was upheld, not forcing anyone to discuss about a topic they did not want to.

4. FINDINGS

The following section presents the interviews' findings, divided into five main subsections, starting with some general information on the participants' SNS habits. After the results have been brought up and before the conclusion, there will be synthesis of the findings, examining the relation of these findings to RQs and the conceptual framework.

Overall, the participants were all highly involved with music, expressing their enthusiasm towards the topic, also identifying it as a big part of their identity. The active daily listening time varied from two to three hours and the average use of SNSs ranged from one hour to eleven. The most used SNSs were Instagram, Whatsapp and Facebook, while Instagram and Whatsapp were also deemed to be the most used for sharing music.

4.1. Self-Reflection

Self-reflection was found to be influential as a motivational factor in sharing. Out of the six participants, five identified it as something that affects their sharing decision, while one disagreed. The disagreeing party's opinion though, might have differed from the rest due to misunderstanding the question, as her answers otherwise seemed to support the notion of self-reflection through digitally shared music. The finding was not a surprise, as all of the interviewees were highly involved with music and described it as an essential part of their life.

– Music, for me, is a way to de-stress, to express myself, to spend time enjoyably, to have fun basically, and also to keep in touch with my heritage since I'm mixed. (Participant A)

– nowadays I'd say that music is a big part of my identity. It is not only the relationship between me and music that feels really important, but also it is an important part of me as a person. (Participant C)

– Well I listen to music every day. It helps me handle my emotions, when the song resonates with you it just eases the mind. Gives an answer to my feelings. It pumps me up when doing sports and mellows me down when going to sleep. (Participant F)

The way in which self-reflection posed itself depended on the respondent. While many of the interviewees talked about a situation where they wanted to give a certain impression to other people by sharing a piece of music, others remembered instances where they wanted to share something, but could not, as it would portray them in an unwanted way.

– I think it's more like self-reflecting, like you want to show people that you listen to a lot of music and like many different genres. You share something that belongs to you, in public. (Participant E)

– most people look at me and they're just like "oh my god, she's a k-pop, whatever fan", so it's like sometimes I share my music to change that image. And some people are surprised that when I share, for instance, My Chemical Romance, saying "oh, you know this song!", like yeah, I don't only listen to K-pop. It's a way of self-expression, I feel like. (Participant D)

– I think if I enjoy the song, I almost always share it. But for example I didn't share a song that I found good, but it was super vulgar, so I didn't want people to know that I listened to that kind of music. (Participant D)

Yeah, it is a way to reflect yourself to others. For example, when I started dating, I wanted to show other sides of me, so I recommended heavier music. It completely depends on the person and what kind of impression they want to give. (Participant F)

Belk's (2013) idea of the extended self can be seen from the first quote, as the interviewee describes the action "you share something that belongs to you –". Even though the item is not physically attainable or even something that is permanently yours, as music streaming applications such as Spotify offer a subscription that needs to be paid every month, if you wish to access the content. The need to show other sides of self is also shown in the answers of the participants.

With one individual, the need to share also stemmed from his acknowledgement as an opinion leader. People complimented his taste in music quite often, so he felt that it was his "obligation to share it so that people can discover it", reflecting himself as an expert on the subject.

4.2. Social Sharing of Emotion

The participants' answers showed that emotional reaction is a large part of the whole musical experience. This was highlighted through comments such as "I listen to it (music) whenever I'm stressed, happy, sad" and "I listen to many types of music, - The type depends on my mood". While everyone agreed that emotions are

something that affects their listening habits, there was some disagreement regarding if those affect their sharing. Overall, five out of six interviewees saw feelings as a reason for music recommendations on SNSs.

– I might not have the intention to share anything on social media, but I listen to a song and I find it hitting me hard. Like for example the lyrics that just get to you and you have to share it. (Participant E)

– but generally speaking, when I find a song that evokes a powerful emotion in me, I feel like ok, the song made an impact on me and I want to share it to others. (Participant C)

– I don't think it matters. I'm not sharing it because of the feeling, but because of the song itself. Even if the song is emotionally important to me, it doesn't necessarily affect what I do. (Participant F)

Another topic discussed, was that if emotions affect one's sharing habits, which type of emotions are more influential and why. Out of the five who identified emotional reaction as one of the motivators to share, one recognized that positives feelings are the drivers for her recommendation process. In addition, she expressed that emotions that are melancholier and sadder prohibit her from sharing, as it feels too personal. Also, it was noted that in order to be more "tolerable" for the mass audience, happier music was regarded as the best option, which could also be reflected to the "sense of belonging" section.

I think I'm more likely to share happier or more upbeat music, because I think that's the easiest to listen to for most people. Also, it feels easier to share that kind of music for some reason. I guess it's more tolerable for masses of people so it's easier to share. And I don't like to share any music that's very personal to me. (Participant A)

The majority of people who identified emotions as a factor for sharing, agreed that somber feelings were more influential in the sharing process compared to the more

cheerful emotions. Some of the participants felt that while melancholy music is more impactful, it translates into sharing on one-on-one channels and not necessarily to platforms like Instagram and Facebook where the audience includes people that are not as close to the communicator.

– I feel like my more negative emotions influence my need to share more than happy feelings. For me, I don't want to post a black screen with my feelings, so instead I resort to posting sad music so people know I'm sad, but they're still like "maybe this song is just really good". (Participant D)

– Sad emotions tend to affect me more, probably because I'm an emotional person. I'd say the emotional impact of a song increases the possibility of me sharing it via one-on-one channels, but not via Instagram, for example. (Participant B)

Participant C characterized his emotional sharing as always joyful. Whether the song is sad or happy, for him it was not important, as he just felt glad that he had found such song and could recommend it forward. As he describes the feeling as "joy", the song itself still could be melancholy in nature, thus I have not classified him in the same category as the woman who was motivated by positive feelings from happy songs.

– For me, even if the song is a really sad song, it always evokes joy in me. A song will never get me sad or angry or anything, only happy. That is why I want to share it. (Participant C)

In five out of six interviews, emotions played a part in the sharing process. The reasons for the emotional reaction varied from personal events to simply clever wordplays.

4.2.1. Second-hand Social Sharing of Emotion

Something that was also asked from the participants was a question about how someone else's emotional reaction translates into second-hand sharing. Most of the opinions brought forward by the interviewees were unique from others, whether it was plainly stating that it never happens or a personal instance where the phenomenon occurred.

For participant C, friend's strong emotions towards a song increased the possibility of listening to the song, also linking the piece of music to the person who shared it. Besides these aspects, nothing changed for her in terms of sharing.

If it's a very close friend, I will definitely listen to the song differently, more attentively. Sometimes I even remember that it's a song that spoke to my friend every time I hear the song. Other than that it doesn't really change anything for me. (Participant C)

Another participant was quick to dismiss the event, but after a short pause, he backtracked a little, saying that it can be "contagious". He told that after hearing a friend's story behind a song, he gave the song another listen and saw it differently. Still, participant C described that the emotions that he felt were not as strong as for the one who experienced it first-hand.

I would say no. You can't fake an emotion, so if it doesn't evoke an emotion in me, it just doesn't translate. But now that I think about it, it can be contagious. When a friend shared a song to me and explained the story behind it, I saw the song differently. It made it kind of better and the emotions kind of attached to me, though not as strongly. (Participant C)

There were two positive replies to the question, the other one clearly reacting to a friend's feelings, resulting in second-hand sharing. The remaining response said how she shares a song due to the original communicator's emotions. Still, due to the original sharer being her boyfriend and the feelings at hand regarding their

relationship, the sharing cannot truly be classified as second-hand sharing of emotion through music.

– I have a few close friends who I share my feelings with and when they share a song that has a strong emotional impact on them, I feel like I feel the same as them. I want my heart to beat the same beat as theirs. (Participant E)

– Two months ago, my boyfriend and I had a rough patch and kind of broke up for a bit. During one of those days I didn't talk to him at all. Then he sent me a song during the night, and I heard it and cried so much. I felt the emotions and then shared it on my story. (Participant D)

The second-hand social sharing of emotion does not seem to translate well to the next person. Based on the interviews, many people can relate to the feelings especially when the original communicator is a good friend, but even then the emotions grow weaker as the new listener does not have first-hand personal connection to the song.

4.3. Sense of Belonging

Based on where the participant liked to share music and to whom, I aimed to research whether there is a sense of community that engages the person to share. No direct questions were used to study this, so it is based mostly on the social cues of the interviewee and what they decided to say at any given time during the interview.

Most of the respondents preferred sharing on Instagram and other SNSs, which offer a route to engage with multiple people at the same time. The idea of your sharing reaching others seemed to work as a motivational factor in the process, giving the communicator a sense of belonging to a group via electronic interaction.

– If I see other people sharing music online it's usually on Instagram Stories. That's why I do it there too. (Participant A)

People's habit of sharing also seemed to strengthen as they got feedback for it. This type of interaction quite probably increases the experienced closeness. As participant C suggested, people want "validation", which leads to feeling better about oneself and encouraging to share more often. Also, one-on-one channels were seen as a medium where you had to give feedback, as the person thought of you when recommending. What was also brought up by participant C, was that compliments motivate you to learn and progress, as he was talking about sharing music that you have created yourself.

One-on-one, they send it to me because they want a reaction from me. So I think in that case I have to honor that and answer, since they thought about me when sharing. Overall, people kind of want validation. I do this myself! It makes me feel better and the song keeps getting better when others like it also. (Participant C)

– I think it is a good way to see your progress when sharing to friends and getting feedback. Getting compliments gets you motivated to learn, even though it is quite superficial. (Participant C)

The added stimuli made the sharing feel more like interaction for the communicators. The positive feelings were mentioned often and what can be interpreted from the tone of voice, people talked about the feedback giver as if they were a close friend, even though in truth they may have been just an acquaintance. For most of the participants, it also encouraged a relationship with the commenter, even though it may only evolve to surround music and nothing more.

– It makes me feel so good. Like when people reply to me sharing music, it makes me feel less annoying. I'm like thank god, people actually care about it. (Participant D)

– It's really good when you share some kind of music and you receive positive feedback on it, a good reaction and all. It makes me feel like my

music is popular. Then they ask more recommendations from me, it feels really good. (Participant E)

The discussion quickly turned into more interaction-oriented, how music recommended via SNSs offers a route to interact with friends and strangers. Two of the interviewees said that they had friend groups that were solely based on music sharing. Also, one of the respondents told that she had made a new friend by sharing on Instagram.

I have friends who I only send music to and they react. Then they do the same to me. That is all our interaction, but it is really fun to keep it up and keep in touch. (Participant E)

– I actually have some groups in Whatsapp that are only dedicated to music. We share and talk about it and that is all we do on that chat. (Participant C)

– some of my friends, before we were friends, bonded over recommended music on Instagram. We were in the same school but never talked before that. Then we started to share music with each other and kind of started a relationship. (Participant D)

The ones who preferred Whatsapp and Facebook Messenger as their first-choice channels for sharing, mainly chose those because of the more personal aspect of sharing and communicating. The easy access and convenience of these channels were noted, while also the possibility to have a conversation was brought up.

– Easy access to friends and you can share more personally. It is the most convenient way, I'd say. Sharing with a good friend is more important, as music is really close to me. On Instagram there are some people who are strangers or closer to that, so I wouldn't want to share there too much. (Participant C)

Concluding, based on the answers and social cues, the need to belong is one force that does affect the sharing habit. Especially on one-to-many platforms, the communication with multiple people strengthens the feeling of belonging to a group.

4.4. Homophily

The tendency to associate yourself with others who hold similar characteristics was found to be influential in the sharing process. While there were questions aimed at the topic, the most meaningful information came when the participants casually mentioned something that came into their mind whilst answering another question. Except for one interviewee, all agreed that homophily is an important variable in their music sharing on SNSs. The one who disagreed, did not completely discard the idea, but rather mentioned that while differing taste in music does not affect her habits to share, it does have an impact on the conversations she has with her friends.

Other participants identified homophily as one of the main reasons for sharing, as “it would be pointless to share music to someone who doesn’t like it”. In addition, one of the interviewees noted how the more he immersed himself in music, the more his friends started to be based on their music preferences. The same respondent also pointed out, how similar music taste drives his behaviour with shared music, not listening to songs or albums recommended by someone they do not think has a comparable taste in music.

– I guess the more you spend time with music, the more you start to base your friends on their music preferences. (Participant C)

– Unless it is someone I know that has a good music taste I don’t bother. If they have a completely different music taste, I won’t listen since it probably won’t be my cup of tea. (Participant C)

Another participant said that in a recommending situation, he feels that he needs a “certain answer”, thus sharing a song to someone with similar music preference

would be the most appropriate way to get that. Based on the interview, the individual wanted to have a conversation about the band or the song and that would be more probable if the other person was into the same type of music. A certain need to have a conversation about the topic.

4.5. Perceived Relationship with an Artist

Initially, the perceived relationship with an artist seemed to be the most obvious motivational factor. The first three interviewees were quick to point out the importance of the artist in their sharing. Two participants followed their favourite artists on Spotify, getting notifications on new music and others opted to following their favourites on SNSs, such as Instagram.

– I followed the artist and got notifications on Spotify. After giving the song a few tries, I liked it and since I'm a big fan of the artist, I wanted to share it on Instagram Stories. (Participant B)

The relatability of the artist was brought up by one participant, saying that if the artist's content and personality overall is something that aligns with the listener, she is more likely to share their music. She also noted that just being a fun personality is not enough for her to call the artist her favourite, as it would also require music that the interviewee appreciates. If the artist is only an interesting personality to follow on SNSs, then the participant would just consider them as someone they follow online.

The two male interviewees both agreed that the artist is close to meaningless for them in their sharing. Both emphasized that the song and its impact is more important. The artist's prior successes might arouse curiosity, but it would not be a driving factor in their sharing. The latter mentioned, though, that if there is a strong feeling of nostalgia, he might be inclined to share the artist's new song, whether it was bad or good.

– it is always the song that I share, I don't share the artist. If the song is impactful and meaningful, I don't care if the artist is unknown. It might be that I

haven't listened to the artist's other music, like at all. So I never share based on who the artist is. (Participant C)

– Well actually it doesn't matter, whether they are a favourite or not. It is the song that matters. Ok, well there might be an artist that has posted music after a long time and then it doesn't matter if the song is good or very bad. Then you just share. (Participant F)

Ultimately, the music stayed as the more important driver, though in most of the cases, the interviewees were willing to slightly compromise on the song quality, if the artist was someone they admired.

4.6. Synthesis of Findings

The findings were divided into five broader sections, based on the conceptual framework that was introduced in the literature review. All of the framework's identified motives were discussed based on what the participants had to say, also adding second-hand social sharing of emotion as its own subsection, since there were more data gathered on it than anticipated.

Conceptual framework's motivators were all found out to be influential to the interviewees' sharing habits, especially sense of belonging and self-reflection. With social sharing of emotion, it seemed to be highly dependent on the individual, as the emotions that affected the sharing were different. As people were asked to describe their sharing experiences and the reasons to partake in it, no other motivators came into the light, which was slightly surprising.

Due to the first RQ studying the differences in motivators for WoM in normal SNS context versus music context, it was important to have the broader sections be the driving factors that were identified in the conceptual framework. By arranging the findings this way, it would be easier to compare my results with others' in the discussion section that follows. This arrangement also helps with RQs two and three, as both are about the social sharing of emotion as a motivator, thus it being

appropriate to have it as one of the subsections. Overall, the layout is designed to help with the discussion and make it clearer.

4.7. Conclusion

Regarding the sharing platform, Whatsapp and Instagram were seen as the most appropriate. Whatsapp offered the participants a more personal way of communicating and for most it was mainly for one-on-one interaction. Instagram was thought of as the best one-to-many medium to share music. When asked about how the introduction of the “Stories” function changed their sharing habits, it became clear that it had increased people’s music sharing, as it was a more casual way of communication. Prior to Instagram Stories, people shared their music on Snapchat, as it originally offered that one-to-many route.

Sense of belonging seemed to be one of the capital motivators, especially on platforms that provided interaction with many people simultaneously. Feedback that was gotten on these channels provided more incentives to share, as the belonging to a group grew stronger. Another influential driver was self-reflection, which was experienced by most of the interviewees. Portraying oneself in a certain way, whether it was as smart or diverse, was deemed to be an important part of the sharing process.

Two more obvious factors were the perceived relationship with an artist and homophily. The latter was apparent in people’s relationships, especially with the participants who were more immersed in music through hobbies. In the case of the former, favourite artist’s social media presence was noted to affect the decision to share. Though, while it did have an effect, the music stayed as the focal point.

Lastly, the social sharing of emotion was something that most of the interviewees agreed with. What was the topic of disagreement, however, was which emotions were the most influential in the sharing, as some shared when feeling happy and others were affected more by the more somber feelings. How the felt emotions

translated into second-hand sharing, was not as apparent. While many of the participants were able to identify with the communicator and their feelings, the strength of emotions seemed to grow weaker as the sharing happened. Ultimately, all of the identified motivators were present in the music sharing process on SNSs.

5. DISCUSSION

This section will revolve around the three RQs that were introduced at the start of the thesis and is also organized based on those. Parallels between the findings and the existing literature will be drawn to see, what differs and what does not, leading the discussion about the topic. Lastly, a conclusion will be provided on the RQs and the interaction between the findings and the prior literature.

5.1. Are the motivational factors the same for eWoM in music context, as they are in normal SNS context?

As the conceptual framework was partly based on their work, I start the comparison of motivators with Chu and Kim's (2011) five identified drivers for eWoM behavior: tie strength, homophily, trust, normative influence and informational influence. Compared to these, my identified five motivators differ in four ways, as trust, tie strength, normative and informational influence were not included. While these four terms were not used, many were included in the replacing words. Tie strength could be found from sense of belonging, and perceived relationship with an artist, and normative influence, which is "the tendency to conform to the expectations of others" (Chu & Kim, 2011), was part of self-reflection. As only factor that was completely missing was trust, replaced with social sharing of emotion, it could be said that in the end the substance was quite the same.

Starting the individual examination of motivators with sense of belonging, the findings seemed to show that channels that provide a way to reach more people

were preferred. The feedback also encouraged the action of sharing, probably increasing the experienced closeness. Also, the relationships between people were regarded as an important driver, as most of the participants were more active in their sharing habits with people they knew and were friends with. It was said that the traits of SNSs make people feel that their social ties are stronger than they actually are (Chu & Kim, 2011), which was also supported by the interviews, as people were willing to refer to acquaintances as friends and share more music to them through one-to-many channels. While stronger ties meant more recommendations between people, weaker relationships still had a big effect, as the connective nature of SNSs made it easier to dismiss the weakness of the tie. Sense of belonging also examined people's need for social relationships and it mostly dealt with the weaker ties that come from sharing on one-to-many platforms. Overall, the need for social interaction was an influential theme in the findings, with which several authors would agree with, even if the term might have been different in their research (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012; Salo et al., 2013; King et al., 2014).

Self-reflection was also an important part in the sharing process. While it did not necessarily mean that the communicator would conform themselves to others' expectation after the sharing was done, meaning that feedback did not change the communicator's habits, many of the participants chose music to recommend based on the person they were sharing to. For King et al. (2014) this was brought up as "self-enhancement", giving a certain idea of yourself based on what you share and how. In Akrimi and Khemakhem's (2012) research, "self-esteem" would have been the term that was used to portray this motivator and with Cheung and Thadani's (2012) work "expertise" would be included in this, as expertise is something that someone might want to show to others. Even though Larsen et al. (2010) did not study eWoM behavior, their paper focused on how music's consumption overall is self-representative, which can be further linked to Belk's (2013) idea of extended self in the digital world. Hennig-Thurau et al.'s (2004) study also adds something to this factor, as they find that self-interested consumers form the largest segment of eWoM

communicators. While an interesting find, my findings did not measure or examine this, so no links can be drawn to the results.

The similarities in music taste were a factor that continued to be influential, as when people had the same musical preferences, they were more likely to share songs and albums with each other. While homophily was an important factor in this study, it did not seem to be with other authors, as no one used terms close to it, except for Chu and Kim (2011). That being said, many authors such as Salo et al. (2013), King et al. (2014), and Akrimi & Khemakhem (2012) included social interaction in their motivators, which is highly linked to the subject of homophily. So, while the exact term was not used, it can be present in the terms that were used, even though not similar to each other.

Listener and artist's perceived relationship was a topic that was discussed also in other writings. Since the music context is something that none of the authors studied, they had similar ideas, only with different choice of words. Mostly, the concept appeared in the form of "product involvement", which was used by Akrimi and Khemakhem (2012) and Hussain et al. (2018). King et al. (2014) wrote about it as "product/retailer performance" and Hennig-Thurau et al.'s (2004) altruism could also be implemented here, as some of the interviewees said that one of their motives was to promote the artist as they "deserved more" and another one described sharing a good song as a "good deed".

The one motivational factor that differed from other authors' motivators, was social sharing of emotion. It is something that was found influential, since all participants agreed that listening to music overall was an emotional hobby. As none of the researches talked about music and why C2C sharing happens in that context, it would have been difficult for them to propose this as a motivator, as it is highly linked to music. Still, since every author had some social aspects identified as driving factors, it could be argued that this is part of one of those. Nonetheless, the exact phenomenon was not brought up by any of the other studies, thus the motivator can be described as unique.

As other identified determinants can be linked to these five factors, there was one that differed from the rest: economic incentives. This eWoM determinant was found from Hussain et al.'s (2018) and Hennig-Thurau et al.'s (2004) work. While these incentives do exist, the probability that they are a major, visible part of the eWoM motivators for music sharing in C2C interaction seemed unlikely, thus I did not include it in the factors. Since none of the participants talked about the element in their interviews, it strengthens the notion that in music sharing it is not as crucial.

Concluding, the biggest difference between the identified drivers was that my framework had social sharing of emotion as one motivator, while the others did not. A determinant that I did not include, was the economic incentives, even though it was present in some of the authors' studies. Overall, my paper's identified motivators are quite similar to the ones that can be found from the existing literature, even though the terms that are used may vary.

5.2. How does the emotional reaction to a song affect the sharing process on SNSs?

As was noted, emotional reaction does play a part in music sharing. Based on the interviews it can be said that the stronger the reaction, the likelier people are going to share it. Although this was noticed, people's preferences over which emotion was appropriate to share, varied. For most it was the melancholy that affected them, but some said that the more joyful emotions drove the sharing.

Rimé (2009) focused on massive changes or events in life and how the emotions drive the sharing of those, not studying music. As Rimé (2009) also discovered, the more somber feelings seem to be more effective in engaging people in sharing. Liljeström et al. (2012) may disagree with Rimé (2009) though, as they divided individuals based on factors such as extraversion and neuroticism, meaning that people are more affected by positive versus negative emotions, respectively. While the melancholy was more fruitful in sharing in my research, for many it meant that

the sharing had to happen on one-to-one channels, such as Whatsapp, as it was deemed to be too personal to share to strangers.

Larsen et al.'s (2010) study on music consumption as representation of self could also be reflected here, as self-representation may relate to the emotions that the communicator feels at a certain point in time. Still, their paper itself does not focus on emotions, just the idea could be broadened to include it. Lastly, it seems that Rimé's (2009) idea of social sharing of emotion does also apply to music and its sharing on SNSs.

5.3. How well do the experienced emotions translate into second-hand sharing on SNSs?

While the emotions can be powerful for the one experiencing them first-hand, whether those feeling transfer to others was the last of the research questions. Liljeström et al. (2012) suggested that the emotions felt by the communicator may not extend to the next person as strongly as for the initial listener. They studied the emotional reaction to a song via skin conductance and heart rate, trying to establish what affects the emotions that are felt by the listener. With skin conductance, it was shown that when listening to a song with a friend, the levels rose significantly or moderately, depending on whether the person had chosen the song, or it was chosen randomly. The same happened with heart rate and self-chosen music, although sampled music's influence was insignificant, even when listened with a friend.

Since the reason for the reaction is quite personal, it would be appropriate to assume that its transfer to the next in line is not free flowing and some of the emotion is lost in translation. Still, Liljeström et al.'s (2012) study shows, that for the one choosing the song, the intensity of emotion experienced does increase when listened with a friend, also showcasing that the other person's feelings are enhanced. Still, when the person does not choose the song, the reaction is lower compared to the chooser's, also noting that for the receiver, the experience might not be as intense. This could

be seen from Liljeström et al.'s (2012) figure that shows how sampled music does not raise the heart rate of the person when social context is increased but does increase the skin conductance level.

While the initial thought was that the emotion is most likely lost almost completely, the interviews showed that the feelings do travel from one person to another, even more than expected. Still, the preservation of the emotion required a strong tie with the communicator, otherwise it would not go forward. Even though Liljeström et al. (2012) did not study sharing, their results are intertwined with this study and could be examined in the light of the thesis.

5.4. Conclusion

All of the research questions were answered, and some were aligned with the assumed outcomes. The motivational factors for normal eWoM and eWoM in music context were relatively the same, except for eWoM with music seemed to hold slightly more social aspects to the sharing, compared to its counterpart. The differences between this paper's motivators versus others' were that social sharing of emotion was identified in this thesis, while some others had economic incentives that were not included here.

Emotional reaction's impact on the sharing process was deemed to be important, but not crucial. It did affect almost everyone in the interviews, but not necessarily all the time. The second-hand sharing of emotion was not as emphatic, as a person's feeling are personal and not easily transferable, unless the communicator and receiver have a close relationship. Prior literature on music's emotional impact provided interesting insights into how intense these emotions are, though the texts were not regarding sharing, but just the experienced emotions and their strength.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The conducted research found that all of the identified motivators affected the sharing habits of the individuals that were interviewed. These factors differed slightly from the more usual ones identified in prior eWoM research, as the consumption of music is different to the normal purchase and use of products and services. While all factors were present, the magnitude of many was either more or less significant than was expected initially.

Consumers' motivations seem to heavily lie on social aspects, as the interviews showed that music sharing is seen a way of communicating and starting a conversation. The prior research on eWoM antecedents also shows that socializing is an influential part of the process (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Chu & Kim, 2011; Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012; Salo et al., 2013; King et al., 2014), affecting most people. Also, music's emotional side does affect the sharing habits of individuals but does not necessarily transfer forward with the same magnitude to the next listener. Depending on the chosen channel, sense of belonging affects the sharing, though not as much. On one-to-many mediums, need to belong does increase the sharing and especially is affected when the communicator receives positive feedback.

In terms of SNSs, music is mostly shared via Whatsapp and Instagram's 24-hour update function. The research gap that was the lack of information on motivators for C2C music sharing on SNSs has been started to answer, providing some useful insights into the reasons why one might want to share a piece of music online.

6.1. Limitations

While interview research has its advantages, it does have some disadvantages too. Firstly, the sample size is quite small at six, thus no generalization can be done to the bigger population, just ideas of what could be. On the other hand, the small sample size does grant the opportunity to do more thorough interviews and get more out of an individual.

Regarding the participants themselves, all were chosen based on their interest in sharing music. While it is good for the exploratory part of the research, it does mean that only the other end of the spectrum was examined, leaving biases in terms of what the general population might think. Also, the interviewees were all university students from ages 20 to 23. The fact that everyone is a university student poses its own problems, but especially the age provides a narrow look into the young generation. A more diverse group of people would have been preferred, in terms of age and occupation.

An advantage that can be seen is that the sample population is diverse in terms of nationalities. What could be harmful, though, is the fact that most of the people were offered their most natural language to do the interview in, but two did not get the chance, since I do not speak their native language. This could have masked some expressions, as the participants could not express themselves fully.

Lastly, the interviews were not conducted in the same manner, due to transportation constraints. This led to one being held via a phone-call, removing the possibility to study social cues that may be apparent only during a face-to-face interview. The lack of consistency with the interviewing method adds situational dissimilarity to the research.

6.2. Business Implications

The implications for artists are quite simple. While good music stays at the center of the topic, good social media presence does lower the listeners' criticality towards the music, meaning that not all songs have to be hits. Also, by being transparent and likable on digital platforms, the consumers might take an interest in the artist itself and start sharing the artist instead of music.

Another business implication comes in the form of advertisement. Music is a part of almost every form of media, whether it is television, internet or radio. Knowing which emotions strike the listeners most, is a good way to get them sharing the

advertisement, engaging in WoM marketing. By designing the ads with the desired mood, combined with similar background music, the company's promotion videos could gain more shares. This also applies to online influencers and their marketing, whether it is about trying to create the next big trend or just advertising their own merchandise. By knowing the striking emotions, the probability of going viral can be maximized to the fullest.

6.3. Future Research

Since the research was done qualitatively and with interviews, it does have its advantages. The limitations that were brought up could be solved with a quantitative research that provides the quantity to the ideas that this study generated. By studying the topic with a quantitative study, there would be a possibility to generalize the outcomes to a broader population.

From the literature that was read, one possible research topic could be to study one specific artist's communication with their fans, and how that affects the sharing of the listeners. This would mean choosing an artist that has a highly active fanbase, for instance Beyoncé and her fans or Justin Bieber and his.

As this study's participants were all in their twenties, it would be interesting to see what the younger generations say are their favoured places to find and listen to music. TikTok is a new social media platform that is not too researched yet in terms of music. As YouTube is heralded as the place for musicians to start their careers, TikTok could become another alternative for launching a music career. Also, TikTok as a platform seems to prefer trends that involve music or sounds, so studying why these certain songs and recordings are more likely to go viral would be interesting.

Lastly, I find the emotional aspect of music sharing an interesting topic and think that there is a possibility for further, more comprehensive research for which emotions affect the sharing process the most and how those feeling affect the closeness and

loyalty that the listener experiences towards the artist or brand, that is linked to the song.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview Questions

MUSIC RELATED

1. How significant is music in your life? What is your relationship with music?
 - a. How much do you actively listen to music in a day?
2. Do you have any favourite artists?
 - a. Why are they your favourite?

SNS RELATED

3. Do you use social networking sites such as Whatsapp, Instagram, etc.?
 - a. Are these SNSs a big part of your daily life? Could you give an estimation of how many hours per day do you spend on these channels?
 - b. What channels are most used? Why?

BEING THE COMMUNICATOR

4. Do you share music via these channels?
 - a. **Do you remember a specific time when you wanted to share a piece of music via a social networking site? I would like for you to go through this experience from discovering the song, to deciding to share it to whomever and what happened afterwards?**
5. Which of these channels is the most used for sharing, why?
6. Has the introduction of “stories” functions on Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat changed your sharing habits? How?
7. Do you prefer to share to one person at a time or multiple? Why?

MOTIVES FOR SHARING

- a. What kind of people are the one you share to? Why? (Similar music taste?)
 - b. How much does the relationship with the one you are sharing with affect your sharing habits?
8. When we talked about your favourite artists, how important is that artist for your sharing? How?

9. What does the action of sharing music via these channels mean to you?
 - a. Do you share music to maintain and/or establish social relationships?
(Keeping up with a friend)
10. Do you use music as something to reflect yourself? (Giving a different impression of yourself)
 - a. Do you share songs that are similar to your current mood?
11. If the song has a strong emotional impact to you (happy, sad, etc.), does that increase the possibility of you sharing it?
 - a. Which emotions tend to affect your sharing more? Why?

FEEDBACK

12. How often do you get feedback from your sharing? (Mainly channels where others are not obliged to give feedback, e.g. Instagram Stories)
 - a. How does it make you feel?

BEING THE RECEIVER

13. When you have been the one being shared to, how often do you comment on others' shared music? (Mainly on channels where one is not obliged to comment, e.g. Instagram Stories)
 - a. Why do you give feedback?
14. How often do you share the song that your friends/stranger shared?
 - a. If a friend finds a song emotionally impactful, how well does that translate to you and your sharing?

GENERAL INFORMATION

15. How old are you?
16. Where are you from?
17. Do you have anything to add?